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Two Former Reporters Now Senators to Probe 'Security' News Bans

By the Associated Press

Two Senators who used to be reporters are going to try to find out if it is overly difficult some times to get official information about what goes on in the Government.

Senators Moody, Democrat, of Michigan, and Monroney, Democrat, of Oklahoma, who used to work for the Detroit News and the Oklahoma News (Oklahoma City), respectively, today began organizing a special subcommittee to investigate any suppression or censorship of Government news.

To Start With Order.

Senator Moody, heading the specially created group, chose as a starting point President Truman's order of last September directing civilian Government agencies to withhold information if they deemed its release would be harmful to national security.

Senator Moody said he also will look into what he termed the "self-security" orders of agency heads denying reporters access to information that might embarrass them.

Senator Moody and Senator Monroney said they have experienced it far too often in their own reportorial work.

They invited Washington newsmen to submit specific instances which might be explored in their inquiry.

Senator Moody said two points marked for a hearing are (1) the refusal last winter of Secretary of Agriculture Brannan to explain the firing of Jack I. Cowart, an aide who later was convicted on a charge of unlawfully accepting payment from a private firm for helping it recover a claim against the Government, and (2) the Federal Trade Commission's continuing refusal to disclose its finding in an investigation of alleged international oil cartels and monopolies.

In the first case, Mr. Brannan simply refused to tell. In the second, the FCC cited the security order.

Senator Moody said he plans to invite newsmen to serve on a non-salaried advisory board to help the inquiry.

Francis D. Flanagan, counsel to the group who has guided the Senate Permanent Investigations Subcommittee in many inquiries into wrong-doing in Government, had orders to get ready for a start of hearings in about two weeks.